

**MINUTES OF NAVY ENTOMOLOGY STEERING COMMITTEE (ESC)
HELD 17 FEB 2005, VIRGINIA BEACH, VA**

1. The Chair started the ESC meeting at 0800, 17 FEB 05. The roster is presented below.

Members Present: CDR Beavers, Chair
 CDR Corneil, OIC DVECC Bangor
 CDR Claborn, OIC DVECC JAX
 CDR Rankin, NEHC Representative
 LCDR Hoffman, Assistant Specialty Leader
 LCDR Prendergast, CONUS NEPMU Representative
 LT Stell, USMC Representative
 LT Stancil, R&D and Junior Officer Representative
Members Absent: OCONUS NEPMU Representative
Guests: CAPT Hiland, CO NEHC

a. CAPT Hiland shared with the committee the progress on the closure of DVECC, Bangor and the changing NEHC mission. CAPT Hiland answered several questions and then the Chair thanked CAPT Hiland for his time and willingness to speak before the ESC.

2. **Old Business.**

a. **Professional Development Plan (PDP).** CDRs Corneil and Claborn described how the recently developed PDP for junior entomologists is being utilized at both Centers. CDR Claborn emphasized how the PDP has been incorporated into their midterm counselings & FITREP writing process. LT Stancil mentioned he had received some feedback from junior officers and all had said they liked the PDP.

b. **Standardization of USMC/FDPMU AMAL Blocks.**

(1) Several issues related to this topic were discussed. The ESC believed it would be ideal that if similar types of vector surveillance and control equipment items were required by both USMC and FDPMU AMALs, then those similar items should be the same models made by the same manufacturers. This standardization would minimize the need for deployed entomologists and PMTs to be familiar with the nuances of a multitude of devices that would essentially all have the same capabilities. GOAL: LCDR Hoffman and LT Stell will coordinate the comparing of the USMC and FDPMU AMALs and report back to the ESC which equipment items were potentially suitable to be standardized across both blocks.

(2) CDR Claborn brought up the issue of the Army's "Single Fuel Policy." While it has not yet been fully implemented, DVECC, JAX is evaluating a diesel powered ULV unit. Further discussion was held regarding coordinating the phasing in of new equipment items in both AMALs such as having backpacks that run on compressed air vice gasoline. GOAL: Push standardization into diesel operating equipment items in the USMC and FDPMU AMALs. LCDRs Schoeler and Hoffman are the vector control component managers and thus

they will be the conduit for these issues as well as coordinating any standardization within the FDPMU & USMC blocks. LT Stell will work with LCDR Hoffman and compare the FDPMU & USMC blocks and report back to the ESC.

c. **New Accessions and Distance Learning.** Distance learning/online training for advanced degrees is becoming more common every day. The Chair provided information, given to him by LTJG Gourdine, to the ESC on the various U.S. universities that offer MA or MS degrees that might enable potential accessions to be qualified to join the Navy as entomologists. The ESC agreed that the key problem with these degree offerings is that they do not include a thesis option. Everyone strongly believed that the knowledge and experience gained by conducting intensive research and by putting that research methodology and results in a complete and thorough manuscript is critical in establishing whether or not someone has the potential to serve as a competent Navy entomologist. Based on these discussions, the ESC unanimously agreed that the Navy should continue to require a traditional MS thesis degree in an appropriate field as a minimum qualification to become a Navy entomologist.

3. **New Business.**

a. **NEHC Advisory Board.**

(1) CAPT Novak, XO of NEHC, came by and briefly discussed the issue of NEHC's Community Advisory Boards. The Chair stated that the term "Advisory Board" was new to him and that "ESC" was the term currently used by the committee. CAPT Novak stated that in these days of constrained funding, the name of the committee was not as important as identifying the committee's mission. The XO also stated that NEHC would be able to justify supporting two meetings a year if the committee could demonstrate that NEHC would receive a good return on its investment.

(2) After CAPT Novak left, considerable discussion was held. All parties recognized that while we are a diverse community, nearly 75% (25/35) of all entomology billets are in the NEHC corporation, and most entomologists will spend at least two tours within the corporation. It was also noted that the other billets, such as those within the Marine Corps and Navy medical R&D, benefit from having representation on the ESC. The ESC unanimously agreed that NEHC has benefited from having the ESC and the entomology community (and its ESC) also needs NEHC's support. Therefore, the ESC will strive to support the NEHC mission and the needs of its entomologists but will also remember that it serves all Navy entomologists and will thus serve the needs of those assigned outside of the NEHC corporation as well. As one means of accomplishing the latter, the committee recommended that copies of the Minutes from each ESC meeting be sent to 00MSC to keep them apprised of the challenges and successes within the Navy entomology community.

b. **Junior Officer Report.** LT Stancil conducted a brief community-wide survey for LTs and LTJGs and, while greatly mixed, discussed the results. The primary concerns of the Junior Officers appear to be lack of clarity in the respective missions of the FDPMU and the entomologists assigned to them; promotion opportunities in light of increasing competitiveness within the MSC combined with lack of leadership opportunities within various junior

entomology billets; and lack of a formal mentoring system. Members then asked what LTs Stancil's and Stell's views were of the general morale of the Junior Officers. They agreed that in light of the events associated with DVECC, Bangor, including its impending closure, the overall morale while good, is not as good as they have seen. LT Stancil also stated that probably 40% of the Junior Officers have developed a "wait and see" approach regarding whether or not they are going to make the Navy a career or not. This fact was troubling to the ESC because in the past, close to 80% of respondents would reply that they were definitely planning on staying in the Navy and serving as entomologists. The committee agreed to examine this issue closer over coming months.

c. Closure of DVECC, Bangor and Realignment of FDPMUs.

(1) The Chair, along with both OICs, described in depth the changes that are coming due to the changing mission of NEHC. The plan is for DVECC, Bangor to close this FY with three entomology billets transferring to NEPMU5, three to DVECC, JAX, and one to NEPMU2. The entomology billets at the OCONUS NEPMUs would remain unchanged. All of the FDPMU support mission would relocate to either NEPMU2 or NEPMU5. The larger number of entomologists going to NEPMU5 is due to NEPMU5 taking on the entomology portion of the training mission for PMT school. Of note, Dr. Tozer's and Mr. Desormier's positions will transfer to NEPMU5 as well. In addition, DVECC, JAX will assume all USMC Medical Augmentation Program (MAP), now known as Health Sciences Augmentation Program (HSAP), responsibilities from the NEPMUs.

(2) Considerable discussion followed on what would be the roles of those entomologists at the CONUS NEPMUs and DVECC, JAX, now and in the future. Additional discussion took place on how the mission of DVECC, JAX was going to change. All agreed that while this is all still unfolding, the ESC can assist NEHC by playing a significant role in the process. The Chair and both OICs will do their best to ensure that the ESC is kept abreast of what is happening and to incorporate the committee into NEHC's decision making process.

4. Topics from the Floor.

a. **Training.** Discussion was held on the need to improve the combat skills and better prepare new accessions for war. The combat skills training received by FDPMU members received strong reviews. However, members felt that preliminary combat training, such as what occurs at Officer Candidate School (OCS), or the training that new chaplains receive, should be incorporated into Officer Indoctrination School. The Chair will work with CDR Claborn to further investigate this issue.

b. **Contractors and pest/vector control in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF).** Contract pest and vector control operators are becoming more common throughout the OIF theater of operations and problems are being reported. Some of these problems may have resulted when Navy entomologists are assigned to support Army personnel. The Army's concept of operations is that Army medical personnel conduct surveys and contractors conduct control operations; however, in the Navy/USMC model, Navy medical personnel perform surveillance and control. In addition, the qualifications of more than a few contract vector control specialists have been

questionable and it was often difficult for Navy entomologists to evaluate, correct, and enforce practices that may or may not be adequately defined in the Army contract. Several ESC members will be attending the upcoming Armed Forces Pest Management Board (AFPMB) meeting scheduled for 7 March. They agreed to bring this issue up and report back to the ESC on what steps are being taken to reduce or eliminate this issue.

5. With no further discussion, the Chair closed the meeting at 1500.

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G. M. BEAVERS